

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
IN OPPOSITION TO L.D. 800**

An Act To Expand Migratory Waterfowl Hunting Opportunities

SPONSORED BY: Representative PARRY of Arundel

CO-SPONSORED BY: Senator DUTREMBLE of York
Representative BENNETT of Kennebunk
Representative DICKERSON of Rockland
Representative HARVELL of Farmington
Representative POULIOT of Augusta
Representative SAVIELLO of Franklin

DATE OF HEARING: March 28, 2013

Good afternoon Senator Dutremble, Representative Shaw and members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee, I am John Boland, the Director of the Bureau of Natural Resources at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, speaking in opposition to L.D. 800.

If enacted, LD 800 would permit waterfowl hunting on Sundays during the second season in the coastal zone of Maine's waterfowl season. For the record, Maine has three waterfowl hunting zones, northern, southern and coastal.

As a little background, since the 1960s the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service maintains that all States are treated equally under existing Federal regulations and are allowed similar frameworks to hunt certain species of migratory birds. Sunday hunting is determined by the state, and is permitted in some states, and prohibited in others. Since 1997, states have been allowed a 60 day waterfowl hunting season. In states where no Sunday hunting is allowed, agencies are allowed compensatory days for waterfowl hunting whereby Sundays are not counted as part of the 60 day hunting season.

This proposal calls for Sunday hunting in the late (second) season in the Coastal Zone only. Should this take place, Maine would no longer be a "no Sunday hunting State". Hunters in the North Zone and the South Zone would no longer be able to take compensatory days in these other two waterfowl zones in Maine, which is the vast majority of the state. Nine days of hunting opportunity would be lost in the North Zone alone, based on last fall's migratory bird season. No compensatory days accounted for in

the South Zone would reduce hunting opportunity in that Zone as well, if the current proposal were to pass. Additionally, if this bill passes, the season length of the coastal zone, a newly established zone developed at the request of hunters wanting to hunt later into the season, would need to be shortened.

In summary, LD 800, An Act to Expand Migratory Waterfowl Hunting Opportunities, would actually result in a loss of hunting opportunity for Maine waterfowl hunters.

I would be glad to answer any questions at this time.